

OP-180

Sculpturing as an approach to train holistic thinking and perception in the medical curriculum

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Introduction: In recent years a development towards an increasing specialization and particularization can be observed in medicine and science. This development is present in research, diagnostics and therapy and also has an impact on teaching and medical curricula. Although highly specialized knowledge is without doubt crucial and beneficial the ability to conceive a subject or person in their respective entirety is likewise essential. Considering a person's entirety in the sense of a holistic thinking is nowadays primarily found in complementary medicine (CM) and is one of the reasons why patients chose CM. One possibility to acquire and train the ability to think and conceive holistically is to actively participate in arts. This is because working artistically is impossible without the ability to conceive objects in their entirety. This is particularly easily understandable in sculpturing, where a modification of even a detail alters the appearance of the entire sculpture. The aim was to assess whether a sculpturing class promotes holistic thinking and perception in medical students.

Methods: In order to enable students to train their competence in thinking holistically we offer the elective course "Sculpturing in Anatomy" at the Medical School of our University. In this 20 hours class students sculpture with clay different skeletal bones. Anatomical objects are chosen because they have features related to function but their individual form can only be understood and appreciated in the context of the entirety of a living and moving organism. Students experience and train to build and perceive three-dimensionally as well as to become aware of the building process. This enables besides the common static thinking a more processual thinking. Towards the end of the course students reflect on the course in form of an essay or poster.

Results: The contents of these are often surprising. Students appreciate having the opportunity to work with their hands, the calmness of the sculpturing process; name a deepened comprehension of the skeleton, an improved understanding of building processes and a more easy access to learn anatomic terms and biomechanics of the skeleton.

Conclusion: The intended aims of the course can at least in part be achieved. This is particularly interesting and extraordinary because we do not inform the students about the aims prior to or during the course.

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